

It was the first time I sensed it, like a tooth filling beginning to dislodge. In a bid to moderate the niggling nuisance, I wriggled my toes encouraging it to fall from position. The meandering streets formed a steep incline, prompting the stones next movement, rolling wayward, tumbling somewhere down towards the heel. As my foot met the freshly laid soft black tarmac, the stone had re-orientated round during it's journey from front to back, kissing my heel with it's newly found confidence. Reluctant of breaking stride, temporarily I allowed my foot to fall limp, nose down trying to tempt the shrapnel to roll back under the arch to it's more manageable resting place. I brought my right foot down once more, to only clamp the stone between the ball of my foot and the sole of my shoe. Subsequently piercing my most recently matured penny-sized blister. I widened my mouth, gritted my teeth and exhaled a pointed gasp of discomfort in the direction of the stone. After being brought to a standstill, I raised my leg back up from the ground, once more allowing my foot to fall limp, however this time following it up with a quick kick of the leg. Finally it had made it's way back up to the toe-end. I plodded along on the tip-toes of my right foot. Following the ring road round, back past through the pedestrian filters; street bollards followed by zebra crossings, traffic lights and speed bumps. The cities pacemakers were in full flow, orchestrating the afternoon rush hour. Approaching the oncoming traffic congestion at the tube exit, I took a sharp left turn down a back alley passageway between or behind buildings.

left

2

3



right

left



left



right (flex toes up)



right

left



right

left



right

left



right (jerking upright)



left

4

5

right

left

right (clench toes, flick foot)

left

right (leaning on the outer side)

right (leaning on the outer side)

left


right


left


I had hit a dead end. Not only did my body stop but my brain stopped. With my desired path cut short and a chain of thought brought to an abrupt standstill, I looked up and absorbed the surroundings for what felt like the first time that day. I slipped, jolted upright. The tread of my gum sole loosened, having been embroiled with a slimy residue picked up by the spitting drizzle. I was in the midst of walking off a war of words, having stormed out from my apartment perhaps an hour or so ago. During the spell spent stomping, unknotting the disagreement, I gave little to no time as to where I was headed. The path dictated by a choice of the quietest streets presented at each turn. With my mind regretting the various mis-steps I'd made earlier that afternoon, I led myself astray. I'm lost.


The stones in this text have been collected in my shoes between 6th March 2018 and 31st July 2019.


 31.07.19
Passage Cottin,
18th arrondissement,
Paris, France.

 18.10.18
Between the 12th and 15th
arrondissement of Paris,
France.

 31.07.19
Between the 18th and 19th
arrondissement, Paris, France.

 21.04.18
Either Gainsborough Mews
or West Street, Hampshire,
England.

 29.11.18
19th arrondissement,
Paris, France.

 06.03.18
Arnhem, Netherlands.